

## Testimony from Jonathan Byrd: MI Laborers' District Council

### RE: HB 5320

Let me first start by thanking the House Regulatory Reform Committee for allowing me to discuss the very important issue of the licensure of fire-sprinkler fitters.

My name is Jonathan Byrd and I am the Legislative Director for the Michigan Laborers Union.

In principle, and substantially by detail, the Michigan Laborers' District Council, and the 12,000 Union Construction Laborers we represent, opposes HB 5320 which mandates the licensure of fire sprinkler fitters.

As a general principle, the Michigan Laborers' believe that any additional licensure within the construction industry is unwarranted and threatens to increase costs in an already depressed portion of the marketplace.

As it relates specifically to HB 5320, the Michigan Laborers' believe that this legislation is redundant as **sprinkler fitter contractors** are already required to be licensed and the State of Michigan, through the Office of the Fire Marshall, is already required to adequately inspect all fire suppression systems. Simply put, the status quo seems to be working when the State of Michigan is allowed to do the job outlined in current statute.

Finally and most importantly, we firmly believe that this legislation includes definitions as it relates to the scope of work and subsequently, directly threatens our Membership's jurisdiction at the jobsite.

For example, the traditional scope of work for the sprinkler-fitters has been within the confines of a building. The Laborers' have traditionally had all of the pipework outside of any building. As one of the definitions in the bill reads, the sprinkler-fitters jurisdiction would become the property line. If this becomes the case, the sprinkler-fitter would be able to claim work outside the building. Consequently, our work jurisdiction is threatened.

In fact, because of the severity of this threat to our jurisdiction, our organization will include and highlight this legislation as we develop voting records to relay to our members.

*We hope you clearly understand our steadfast opposition to this legislation and will strongly consider taking any position in what is unmistakably a trade union jurisdictional issue.*

Simply put, the Michigan Laborers' believe that this legislation, in its current form, should not be voted out of committee and we ask for a no vote until these important issues are resolved.

I would like to again thank the Committee for allowing me to address this issue. On behalf of the Michigan Laborers' and all pipeline workers in this State, I ask for your opposition to this bill. I am available to answer any questions that the Committee may have.